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SII SEEKS EMERGENCY USE NOD FOR OXFORD COVID VACCINE

Serum Institute of India has sought Drugs Controller General of India's emergency use authorisation for Covishield vaccine

PROMISE KEPT, SAYS ADAR POONAWALA

"As promised, before the end of 2020, @SerumInstIndia has applied for emergency use authorisation for the first made-in-India vaccine, COVISHIELD," SSI CEO Adar Poonawala said in a tweet. Pune-based SII has collaborated with Oxford University and UK drugmaker AstraZeneca to make the Covishield vaccine, which was found to be 62% effective

A VACCINE THAT IS FEASIBLE FOR INDIA

- Last week, Pfizer became the first pharma company to seek emergency use authorisation for a Covid-19 vaccine in India
- Covishield can be stored in temperatures between 2°C and 8°C. Therefore, it is logistically more feasible for India than Pfizer's vaccine, which needs to be stored at about -70°C P9

40 million
DOSES OF COVISHIELD VACCINE HAVE ALREADY BEEN MADE BY SSI

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TIRUCHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILUPURAM • KOLLAM • WARANGAL • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

MOB IN FURY

Police use water cannons to disperse protesting BJP workers in Siliguri, West Bengal on Monday | PTI

The BJP claimed a party worker named as Ulen Roy was "beaten to death" by the police during a baton charge

However, the police said there was no lathicharge and the cause of his death was being ascertained

The party condemned the police action and has called a 12-hour bandh in north Bengal on Tuesday | P10

Farmers to harden stance further

Farm unions may skip further talks if govt does not show intent to repeal the three laws in the Wednesday meet; Bharat Bandh today

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ New Delhi / Chandigarh

A day ahead of the Bharat Bandh, most farm unions on Monday decided to further escalate their protest if the government does not accept their demand of repealing the three contentious farm laws in the December 9 talks. One of the steps being considered is not to participate in any future talks, sources said.

"We will intensify our agitation, if needed, after the December 9 talks. After the government is ready to repeal the laws, they can send us the proposal. Until then, we will continue with our agitation," said Ashok Dhawale, president, All India Kisan Sabha.

The hardening of stance came after the farmers felt the Centre would not send the draft amendments it had proposed to make in the laws. The farmers are also peeved at ministers stressing that the laws would not be withdrawn, which is their core demand.

"We haven't heard anything from the government yet so the future course of action will be taken jointly," said Kavitha Kuruganti, a member of the All-India Kisan Sangharsh Coordination Committee.

Another farm leader said they wanted to discuss among themselves the government's proposals before the talks on Wednesday. "We had asked the government that before the December 9 meeting, it should give us the draft amendments so that we can study them. But it seems the government is not interested in sharing the draft before the meeting," he said.

Farmers shout slogans at Singhu on Delhi-Haryana border on Monday | SHEKHAR YADAV

'Bandh won't affect emergency services'

Farm leaders have assured the public that the Bharat Bandh will not affect essential services. They have appealed to their cadres not to force anyone to shut shops or other establishments

Farm leaders said emergency services would not be affected during Bharat Bandh on Tuesday and appealed to their cadres not to force anyone to shut their shops or other establishments.

In view of the bandh on Tuesday, the Centre has issued a nationwide advisory, asking all states and Union Territories to intensify security measures.

Meanwhile, Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar told a group of farmers from Haryana who came to meet him on Monday that the new farm laws are aimed at helping farmers get better price.

"If the agitation goes on, we will deal with it," he reportedly said, when the delegation told him that the agitating farmers are being misled. P9

Previous century's laws have become a burden: Modi

NAMITA BAJPAI @ Lucknow

DROPPING hints that the Centre will not back down on farm reforms, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Monday that archaic laws of the previous century cannot continue forever and that they will need to be junked when they become a burden.

"We cannot build the next century with the laws of the previous century," he said.

Without directly mentioning the contentious farm laws, the PM said reforms should be a continuous process.

He made the remarks while inaugurating the Phase 1 of the construction of the Agra Metro project virtually.

Explaining the rationale behind amending regulations of yore, Modi said that earlier, laws were reformed in bits and pieces to benefit a few sectors. "Now this government is adopting a holistic view while amending the old laws which have lived their age," he added.

The PM's statement assumes significance as it has come a day ahead of the Bharat Bandh called by various farmer organisations against the three farm laws passed in September. P10

SC frowns on Central Vista, allows stone laying on Dec 10

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ New Delhi

THE Centre on Monday assured the Supreme Court that it will not carry out any construction work on the new Parliament building till the apex court pronounces its judgment on a batch of petitions challenging the project.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta gave the undertaking before a bench headed by Justice A M Khanwilkar.

The bench censured the government for aggressively moving ahead with the construction work on the Central Vista project. Prime Minister Narendra Modi is set to lay the foundation stone for the new Parliament building on Thursday.

"We thought we are dealing with a prudent litigation and deference will be shown," the bench said. "We have shown deference to you and expected that you will act in a prudent manner. The same deference should be shown to the Court and there should be no demolition or construction."

Mehta assured the court there will be no construction, demolition or felling of trees. "The foundation stone will be laid but no physical changes," he said. The court then allowed the Centre to proceed with the stone-laying ceremony.

A video grab of seat auctioning at Yadrami village in Kalaburagi district.

Even before polls, 4 GP seats auctioned in Kalaburagi

RAMKRISHNA BADESESHI
@ Kalaburagi

EVEN as the polls for the gram panchayat are scheduled for December 27, four seats in Yadrami village were auctioned off to highest bidders recently, in violation of the People's Representation Act. The video showing the bidding process went viral on Monday and immediately, the poll officer filed a police complaint.

In the video, the auctioneer can be heard saying the minimum bid amount for the seats at Ward No. 1 is ₹26.55 lakh and each member would get a grant of ₹2.5 crore if elected. The general category seat went for ₹8.55 lakh, the SC reserved (woman) for ₹7.25 lakh, SC reserved (man) for ₹5.50 lakh and ST (woman) for ₹5.25 lakh.

Those who won the bids were to be elected unopposed by the villagers. If they fail to pay, another person would be given a chance, it is said.

Deputy tahsildar of Yadrami filed a complaint at Yadrami police station on Monday.

Ramanna Gowda Nagaralli, Honnappa Gowda Kodamanalli, Madivalappa Padashetty, Mallu Kodamanalli, Gowdappagowda Bommanalli and Basappagowda Navane, who were part of the auction, have been named in the complaint.

Cow bill in this session, love jihad in next: CM

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Shivamogga

CHIEF Minister B S Yediyurappa on Monday said that the bill against cow slaughter will be tabled in the ongoing session of the legislature, while legislation against 'Love Jihad' will be taken up during the next session.

The CM, who was at Sagar to attend the wedding in the family of his friend, said that the government is confident of getting the bills passed in the legislature.

Political analyst B S Murthy said, "When the House is in session how appropriate is it for the CM to speak on this legislative business outside the Assembly? Revenue Minister R Ashoka and minister Prabhu Chavan too have made similar statements outside the House before the session started on Monday. It is not in line with legislative propriety."

The Karnataka Prevention of Slaughter and Preservation of Cattle Act was brought in by the BJP government way back in 2010 when B S Yediyurappa was chief minister to stop slaughtering of cows, calves and she buffaloes.

On the Bharat Bandh call given by farmers protesting against three Central farm laws, the CM said Prime Minister Narendra Modi is trying to convince the farmers.

"I request farmer leaders to hold discussion with the PM and withdraw the bandh call. Putting general public to hardship is uncalled for," he said.

Chief Minister BS Yediyurappa addresses the Assembly session at Vidhana Soudha in Bengaluru on Monday, as Deputy CM Govind Karjol looks on | EXPRESS

9L farmers from K'taka to flood Prez with postcards

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

IN a unique form of protest, the President of India will be flooded with nearly nine lakh postcards from Karnataka to voice the concern of farmers against the new agri-bills passed by the Union government.

The 8.8 lakh postcards have been collected from the protesting farmers, who are upset with the new bills. These postcards will be forwarded to the Delhi Congress office, from where they will be posted to the President, said Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee president D K Shivakumar here on Monday.

The campaign has been planned by AICC interim president Sonia Gandhi and senior party leader Rahul Gandhi, he added.

Coinciding with the Bharat Bandh planned by farmers on Tuesday, the Congress will protest outside Vidhana Soudha, but will not cause any inconvenience to the public. The party will extend support to the bandh from national to district level, Shivakumar said.

Ryots to block vehicles in B'luru

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

EVEN as the police have made elaborate security arrangements for Bharat Bandh from 11 am to 3 pm on Tuesday, people are advised to avoid Ballari Road, Tumakuru Road and Mysuru Road. The protesting farmers plan to enter the city through these roads to gain entry to Maurya Circle, Town Hall and Mysuru Bank Circle, where they would congregate at 9 am to express their solidarity with their counterparts protesting on Delhi's borders against the eactment of the Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement of Price Assurance and Farm Services Act, 2020, Farmers Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Act, 2020, and Essential Commodities (Amendment) Act 2020. CONTINUED ON: P4

EXPRESS READ

Vijayapura doctor tops AIIMS examination

Vijayapura: Dr Divya A H, who hails from Vijayapura, has topped the entrance examination for the Doctorate of Medicine course conducted by the AIIMS Delhi, securing the all-India Ranking 1 in results that were announced on Sunday. She scored 67.08 per cent. Dr Divya pursued medicine at BLDEA's Shri B M Patil Medical College in 2012, and then did her MD from the Karnataka Institute of Medical Science at Hubballi in 2016. She also got two fellowships, at JIPMER in Puducherry, and at NIMHANS in Bengaluru. P7

HC to state: Come out with med insurance for elderly

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

The Karnataka High Court on Monday directed the state and central governments to come out with a scheme to extend medical insurance to senior citizens.

A division bench of Chief Justice Abhay Shreeniwas Oka and Justice S Vishwajith Shetty was hearing a public interest litigation filed by city-based Letzkit Foundation.

Declining to issue directions as prayed by the petitioner to the authorities to issue medical insurance policies to senior citizens at a lower premium or at affordable cost, the division bench said that it cannot pass such orders in this regard as the insurance policies will be issued based on various factors including commercial.

"As this court cannot issue a direction to issue insurance policy to senior citizens, we direct the state and central governments to come out with a scheme for senior citizens, especially in the light of the Covid-19 pandemic", the bench said.

The bench observed that it is repeatedly held by the apex court that right to health is a right under Article 21 of the Constitution.

CONTINUED ON: P3

Body found near MiG crash site, could be missing pilot's

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ New Delhi

THE body believed to be that of a Navy pilot, who went missing 11 days ago after a MiG 29K jet crashed off the Goa coast, was found on Monday near the wreckage site.

"Mortal remains of a human body have been recovered in the vicinity of the wreckage site. The samples are being sent for DNA testing for confirmation of identity," a statement from the Indian Navy said.

A Navy spokesperson told this newspaper that the "Identity can be confirmed on completion of the DNA testing."

On November 26, Commander Nishant Singh along with a co-pilot took off on MiG 29K from INS Vikramaditya. The fighter subsequently crashed into the Arabian Sea. While the co-pilot was rescued soon after the mishap, search had been on for the past 11 days to locate Nishant.

"All sections of the aircraft wreckage including ejection seats have been accounted for using side-scan sonar and HD cameras. The FDR/CVR along with other important material have been recovered so far," it said.

GIVING HOPE

How Anju wrote history with one kidney, a tale of inspiration

MARTIN JOSEPH @ Kochi

AFTER finishing a training session in 2001, Anju Bobby George felt there was something wrong with her body. She was taking more time to recover and there were fainting episodes because of allergies. What followed shattered her. Her treating doctor said she was born with only one kidney.

It could have been the death-knell for the 23-year-old. But the long-jumper did not let that define her life. She altered her training regimen and lifestyle with the help of coach and husband, Robert Bobby George. Within two years, she had become the first — and till now the only — Indian to win a medal at World Championships.

What's even more astonishing is that she had kept it a secret till Monday, when she revealed it on Twitter, to help raise awareness and break stereotypes. "Everyone is distressed due to the pandemic and all the uncertainties because of it. The reason why I decided to share this now is in the hope that it offers some motivation during such times. And if it helps athletes who have some kind of troubles and are having self-doubts because of it, then maybe it can help," Anju told this daily.

"I was not recovering quickly. I would also faint sometimes due to allergies to medicines and pain-killers... at first, I was scared because I was seeing myself as this perfect athlete and had all these dreams."

But she has seldom let obstacles come in her way. In fact, weeks before those Worlds in 2003, she was not recovering after competitions. Experts told she would need six months' rest. Within 20 days, she had jumped into history.